



CAIDP Update 2.30 (Aug. 17, 2021) – Expert Survey Reveals AI Concerns

The Pew Research Center, a well-regarded public polling organization, released earlier this summer a troubling [new report](#) on the future of AI ethics. In brief, the [Pew survey](#) found that most experts fear “that the evolution of artificial intelligence by 2030 will continue to be primarily focused on optimizing profits and social control.”

In the 12th Future of the Internet survey, Pew canvassed more than 600 technology innovators and developers, business and policy leaders, researchers and activists. The survey is non-random but also reveals insights from many of those most familiar with the likely impacts of AI. Asked “By 2030, will most of the AI systems used by organizations employ ethical principles focused primarily on the public good?” 68% of respondents said “no” and 32% said “yes.”

Among the concerns identified in the Pew Center report ***Experts Doubt Ethical AI Design Will Be Broadly Adopted as the Norm Within the Next Decade:***

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- It is difficult to define “ethical” AI
- Control of AI is concentrated in the hands of powerful companies and governments driven by motives other than ethical concerns
- The AI genie is already out of the bottle, abuses are already occurring, and some are not very visible and hard to remedy:
- Global competition, especially between China and the U.S., will matter more to the development of AI than any ethical issues

The Pew study also found reasons for hope:

- AI advances are inevitable; we will work on fostering ethical AI design
- A consensus around ethical AI is emerging and open-source solutions can help
- Ethics will evolve and progress will come as different fields show the way

One of the survey respondents, Professor Ben Shneiderman commented, “Ethical principles (responsibility, fairness, transparency, accountability, auditability, explainable, reliable, resilient, safe, trustworthy) are a good starting point, but *much* more is needed to bridge the gap with the realities of practice in software engineering, organization management and independent oversight.”

In the 2020 report [Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values](#), CAIDP noted several public surveys that reflected similar concerns about the AI future. According to a [poll](#) undertaken by BEUC, the European consumer association, a majority of Europeans “disagree or strongly disagree that current regulation is adequate to efficiently regulate AI.” A 2020 [survey](#) of Australian attitudes toward AI found high levels of support for the use of AI to address social, humanitarian, and environmental challenges. The survey also found high levels of support for legislation to ban the use of lethal autonomous weapons, ensure the safety of autonomous vehicles, and protect data privacy. A 2019 [survey](#) of Belgians found a large majority concerned about loss of trust and control over robots and artificial intelligence.